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THE EFFECT OF SPATIAL DISCRETIZATION ON THE
STEADY-STATE AND TRANSIENT SOLUTIONS OF
A DISPERSIVE WAVE EQUATION

by

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March 1976

Approved for public release; distribution unlimited

Prepared for:

Fleet Numerical Weather Central, Monterey, California 93940
Naval Environmental Prediction Research Facility, Monterey,
California 93940

FEDDOCS
D 208.14/2:
NPS-53ZH76036

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The work reported herein was supported by Fleet Numerical Weather Central and the Naval Environmental Prediction Research Facility.

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER NPS-53Zh76036	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) THE EFFECT OF SPATIAL DISCRETIZATION ON THE STEADY-STATE AND TRANSIENT SOLUTIONS OF A DISPERSIVE WAVE EQUATION		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Final - January 1976-March 76
7. AUTHOR(s) Arthur L. Schoenstadt		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93940		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s) N63134-75-PO-50007 N6685676WR00012
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS Fleet Numerical Weather Central Monterey, CA 93940		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		12. REPORT DATE March 1976
		13. NUMBER OF PAGES 35
		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) UNCLASSIFIED
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Dispersive Waves Finite Difference Methods Finite Difference Solutions Fourier Transform Methods Geostrophic Adjustment Numerical Weather Prediction		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) The study of the dispersive wave equation is fundamental to an understanding of the process of geostrophic adjustment. In this report, the effect of replacing the spatial derivatives in a dispersive wave equation with second order, centered finite differences is examined with the use of Fourier Transform methods. The discretization is shown to both decrease the rate of spatial decay of the steady state solution, and to introduce additional transients at least as persistent as those in the differential case.		

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S/N 0102-014-6601

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11. Naval Environmental Prediction Research Facility
Monterey, CA 93940

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1. Introduction

The central issue in approximating a partial differential equation by a finite difference equation is the degree to which the difference equation solution agrees with the solution to the differential equation. This agreement can be considered in both its quantitative (e.g., relative error), or qualitative aspects, e.g., behavior of transients, propagation of fronts, etc.

In this paper we investigate some of these aspects for a prototype dispersive wave (hyperbolic) equation. This type of problem is especially important in numerical weather prediction, since for "fast" time scales, the meteorological primitive equations are dispersive. We consider both the differential and quasi-discrete case, where second order centered spatial differences are used. In both cases solutions are obtained by Fourier transform methods, with steady state solutions extracted directly from the transforms and inverted in closed form, and the asymptotic behavior of the transients determined by the method of stationary phase.

Our analysis shows that discretization of spatial derivatives has two major effects:

(1) The initial conditions of the differential problem contribute to the steady state solution in a manner that decays exponentially with distance. This qualitative effect is retained in the quasi-discrete formulation, but the rate of decay is decreased.

(2) The discretization introduces additional transients beyond those encountered in the differential case. These new transients are at

least of the same magnitude of decay as the differential transients, and, in some instances, they are more persistent.

2. The Differential One-Dimensional Adjustment Process

One of the simplest models of dispersive waves is the linearized one-dimensional shallow water equations with no mean flow, in an infinite region:

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} - fv + g \frac{\partial h}{\partial x} = 0 \quad (1)$$

$$\frac{\partial v}{\partial t} + fu = 0 \quad (2)$$

$$\frac{\partial h}{\partial t} + H \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} = 0 , \quad (3)$$

where u is the perturbation velocity in the x direction, v is the perturbation velocity normal to the x direction, H and h are the mean and perturbed heights of the free surface, respectively, and $g > 0$ and $f > 0$ are gravitational and Coriolis parameters, respectively. This model is especially important in the study of the meteorological problem of geostrophic adjustment, and has been studied in some detail by Rossby [1], Cahn [2], Blumen [3] and Winninghoff [4]. In their papers, the model has been studied by eliminating between the equations to arrive at:

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} + f^2 u - gH \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2} = 0 , \quad (4)$$

then solving (4) by a Fourier Transform approach. After solving (4), solutions for h and v are obtained by substitution into (2) and (3), although closed-form solutions are not produced in some of the papers. Note the dispersive character of (4) is clearly seen by assuming a wave solution:

$$u(x,t) = A e^{i(kx-vt)} ,$$

which leads immediately to:

$$v^2 = f^2 + k^2 gH = f^2(1+\lambda^2 k^2), \quad \lambda = \sqrt{gH}/f . \quad (5)$$

We now derive an alternative means of solving (1)-(3) which is superior in that it does not require elimination, it produces u , v and h without back substitution, it yields interesting insights into the transient and steady state behavior of the solutions in the differential case, and it has an extension in the quasi-discrete case that is quite illuminating.

We denote Fourier Transforms by a wavy overhead bar, e.g.:

$$\tilde{u}(k,t) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} u(x,t) e^{-ikx} dx , \quad (6)$$

etc. Then (1)-(3) reduce directly to:

$$\frac{d\tilde{u}}{dt} = f\tilde{v} - ikg\tilde{h} , \quad (7)$$

$$\frac{d\tilde{v}}{dt} = -f\tilde{u} , \quad (8)$$

$$\frac{d\tilde{h}}{dt} = -ikH\tilde{u} , \quad (9)$$

together with initial conditions:

$$\tilde{u}_0 = \tilde{u}(k,0) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} u(x,0) e^{-ikx} dx , \quad (10)$$

etc. Since (6)-(9) is a coupled set of constant coefficient ordinary differential equations, it can be solved by the usual process of finding the eigenvalues and eigenvectors of the coefficient matrix. This leads straightforwardly to:

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \tilde{u} &= \frac{\alpha_2}{v} e^{i\omega t} - \frac{\alpha_3}{v} e^{-i\omega t}, \\ \tilde{v} &= ikg \alpha_1 + \frac{if}{v^2} \alpha_2 e^{i\omega t} - \frac{if}{v^2} \alpha_3 e^{-i\omega t}, \\ \tilde{h} &= f \alpha_1 - \frac{kH}{v^2} \alpha_2 e^{i\omega t} - \frac{kH}{v^2} \alpha_3 e^{-i\omega t}, \end{aligned} \right\} \quad (11)$$

where v is given by (5), and the α_i are picked to satisfy the initial conditions. Observe that the $e^{i\omega t}$ and $e^{-i\omega t}$ terms both represent the transforms of transients in the time domain. Solving the initial conditions for the α_i , collecting like terms in (11), and simplifying yields:

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \tilde{u}(k,t) &= \tilde{u}_0 \cos \omega t + \frac{f \tilde{v}_0}{v} \sin \omega t - \frac{ikg \tilde{h}_0}{v} \sin \omega t, \\ \tilde{v}(k,t) &= \frac{f}{v} \tilde{u}_0 \sin \omega t + \left\{ \frac{k^2 gH}{v^2} + \frac{f^2}{v^2} \cos \omega t \right\} \tilde{v}_0 + \frac{ikgf}{v^2} \{1 - \cos \omega t\} \tilde{h}_0, \\ \tilde{h}(k,t) &= -\frac{ikH}{v} \tilde{u}_0 \sin \omega t - \frac{ikHf}{v^2} \{1 - \cos \omega t\} \tilde{v}_0 + \left\{ \frac{f^2}{v^2} + \frac{k^2 gH}{v^2} \cos \omega t \right\} \tilde{h}_0 \end{aligned} \right\} \quad (12)$$

Observe that (12) immediately yields by inspection the transform of the steady state ("balanced") solution:

$$\left. \begin{aligned}
 \tilde{u}_S(k) &= 0 \\
 \tilde{v}_S(k) &= \frac{k^2 g H}{v^2} \tilde{v}_o + \frac{i k g f}{v^2} \tilde{h}_o = \tilde{v}_o + \frac{f^2}{v^2} \left\{ \frac{i k g}{f} \tilde{h}_o - \tilde{v}_o \right\} \\
 \tilde{h}_S(k) &= -\frac{i k H f}{v^2} \tilde{v}_o + \frac{f^2}{v^2} \tilde{h}_o = \tilde{h}_o + \frac{H}{f} \cdot \frac{f^2}{v^2} i k \left\{ \frac{i k g}{f} \tilde{h}_o - \tilde{v}_o \right\}
 \end{aligned} \right\} (13)$$

These can be immediately inverted by the convolution theorem, and the observation that

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-|x|/\lambda} e^{-ikx} dx = \frac{2\lambda}{1+k^2\lambda^2} = \frac{2\lambda}{v^2} f^2$$

to yield:

$$\left. \begin{aligned}
 u_S(x) &= 0 \\
 v_S(x) &= v(x,0) + \frac{1}{2\lambda} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-|x-s|/\lambda} \left\{ \frac{g}{f} \frac{\partial h}{\partial x}(s,0) - v(s,0) \right\} ds \\
 h_S(x) &= h(x,0) - \frac{H}{2\lambda^2 f} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-|x-s|/\lambda} \left\{ \frac{g}{f} \frac{\partial h}{\partial x}(s,0) - v(s,0) \right\} ds
 \end{aligned} \right\} (14)$$

Solving equations (1)-(3) by this approach allows us to easily observe several elementary results:

(1) Since $\tilde{u}(k,0)$ does not contribute to any of the steady state solutions, any "imbalance" in $u(x,0)$ does not affect the final balanced state.

(2) The term in (14)

$$\left\{ -\frac{g}{f} \frac{\partial h}{\partial x}(s,0) + v(s,0) \right\},$$

the initial value of the quantity usually referred to as the ageostrophic wind, can be considered as the measure of "imbalance" in the initial state that is not dissipated at the final state.

(3) At steady state, the effects of this initial imbalance contribute most strongly in the immediate neighborhood of the imbalance and die off exponentially in space away from it.

Observe also that the transient part of (12) can be written:

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \tilde{u}_T(k, t) &= \tilde{u}_0 \cos vt + \frac{f}{v} \left\{ \tilde{v}_0 - \frac{ikg}{f} \tilde{h}_0 \right\} \sin vt \\ \tilde{v}_T(k, t) &= -\frac{f}{v} \tilde{u}_0 \sin vt + \frac{f^2}{v^2} \left\{ \tilde{v}_0 - \frac{ikg}{f} \tilde{h}_0 \right\} \cos vt \\ \tilde{h}_T(k, t) &= -\frac{ikH}{v} \tilde{u}_0 \sin vt - \frac{ikHf}{v^2} \left\{ \tilde{v}_0 - \frac{ikg}{f} \tilde{h}_0 \right\} \cos vt \end{aligned} \right\} (15)$$

Explicit inverses to these transforms are expressible in terms of convolutions involving $J_0\left(\frac{1}{\lambda}\sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2}\right)$. However, a simplified view of the asymptotic behavior of the transients is possible by using the method of stationary phase. Let

$$d(x, t) = v(x, t) - \frac{g}{f} \frac{\partial h}{\partial x}(x, t) .$$

Then

$$u_T(x, t) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \tilde{u}(k, 0) \cos vt e^{ikx} dk + \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{f}{v} \tilde{d}(k, 0) \sin vt e^{ikx} dk . \quad (16)$$

Thus, using the method of stationary phase (Appendix 1), we can show, for fixed x as $t \rightarrow \infty$:

$$u_T(x, t) \sim \left[\frac{\lambda f^2 t^2}{2\pi(\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2)^{3/2}} \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \left\{ \left| \tilde{u} \left(\frac{\lambda^{-1} x}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2}}, 0 \right) \right| \cos \left(\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \phi_k \right) + \frac{\sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2}}{\lambda f t} \left| \tilde{d} \left(\frac{\lambda^{-1} x}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2}}, 0 \right) \right| \sin \left(\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \psi_k \right) \right\}, \quad (17)$$

where ϕ_k and ψ_k are slowly varying phases. When $|x| \ll \lambda f t$, this is more conveniently approximated as

$$u_T(x, t) \sim \left[\frac{1}{2\pi \lambda^2 f t} \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \left\{ \left| \tilde{u} \left(\frac{x}{\lambda^2 f t}, 0 \right) \right| \cos(f t + \phi_k) + \left| \tilde{d} \left(\frac{x}{\lambda^2 f t}, 0 \right) \right| \sin(f t + \psi_k) \right\}. \quad (18)$$

Thus the decay to steady state of u at a fixed point x is governed by two factors:

(a) A $t^{-1/2}$ decay, which can be interpreted as the effect due to the dispersive nature of the process, and

(b) An additional possible decay, depending on the degree to which the initial imbalances were distributed in the long wave numbers, since

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \left| \tilde{u} \left(\frac{x}{\lambda^2 f t}, 0 \right) \right| &= \lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \left| \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} u(s, 0) e^{-i(x/\lambda^2 f t)s} ds \right| \\ &= \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} u(s, 0) ds, \text{ etc.} \end{aligned}$$

Similar analysis of $v_T(x,t)$ and $h_T(x,t)$ yield

$$v_T(x,t) \sim \left[\frac{1}{2\pi \lambda^2 f t} \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \left\{ - \left| \tilde{u} \left(\frac{x}{\lambda^2 f t}, 0 \right) \right| \sin(ft + \phi_k) + \left| \tilde{d} \left(\frac{x}{\lambda^2 f t}, 0 \right) \right| \cos(ft + \psi_k) \right\}, \quad (19)$$

and

$$h_T(x,t) \sim \left[\frac{1}{2\pi \lambda^2 f t} \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \left\{ - \frac{Hx}{\lambda^2 f^2 t} \left| \tilde{u} \left(\frac{x}{\lambda^2 f t}, 0 \right) \right| \sin(ft + \phi_k) - \frac{Hx}{\lambda^2 f^2 t} \left| \tilde{d} \left(\frac{x}{\lambda^2 f t}, 0 \right) \right| \cos(ft + \psi_k) \right\}. \quad (20)$$

Note the one difference in $h_T(x,t)$. Due to the presence of the (ik) term in $h_T(k,t)$, the decay due to dispersion of $h_T(x,t)$ proceeds as $t^{-3/2}$, rather than $t^{-1/2}$.

In summary then, we have shown here that the differential formulation of the dispersive wave model (1)-(3) is most easily solved by Fourier transforming to a system of ordinary differential equations. This solution shows the model always tends to a steady state, whose difference from the initial state is determined solely by the initial ageostrophic wind field. The contributions from regions where the ageostrophic field is initially non-zero die out in the steady state exponentially with distance. Lastly, both the initial u and ageostrophic wind fields contribute to transients that die out in time as $t^{-1/2}$ for the velocities, and $t^{-3/2}$ for the free surface height.

3. Second Order Centered Finite Differences - The Quasi-Discrete Adjustment

In this section we present an analytic treatment of the most common difference scheme used for (1)-(3), and investigate the resulting effect on the steady-state and transient behavior discussed above.

Consider the continuous, quasi-discrete, second order centered-leap-frog formulation of (1)-(3)

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \frac{\partial u}{\partial t} &= f v(x,t) - \frac{g}{2\Delta x} [h(x+\Delta x, t) - h(x-\Delta x, t)] \\ \frac{\partial v}{\partial t} &= -f u(x,t) \\ \frac{\partial h}{\partial t} &= -\frac{H}{2\Delta x} [u(x+\Delta x, t) - u(x-\Delta x, t)] \end{aligned} \right\} . (21)$$

If we Fourier Transform this system, noting

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} u(x+\Delta x, t) e^{-ikx} dx = e^{ik\Delta x} \tilde{u}(x, t),$$

we have:

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \frac{d\tilde{u}}{dt} &= f \tilde{v} - \frac{ig}{\Delta x} \sin k\Delta x \tilde{h} \\ \frac{d\tilde{v}}{dt} &= -f \tilde{u} \\ \frac{d\tilde{h}}{dt} &= -\frac{iH}{\Delta x} \sin k\Delta x \tilde{u} \end{aligned} \right\} . (22)$$

Observe this system is identical to (7)-(9) with k replaced by:

$$\sigma = \frac{\sin k\Delta x}{\Delta x} . \quad (23)$$

Thus the solution to (22) becomes identical to (12), except k is replaced by σ , and v by

$$\hat{v} = \left[1 + \left(\frac{\lambda}{\Delta x} \right)^2 \sin^2 k\Delta x \right]^{1/2} . \quad (24)$$

Observe that the sinusoidal terms in (12) continue to represent transients when v is replaced by \hat{v} and k by σ . Thus the quasi discrete case will tend toward a steady state whose transform is:

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \tilde{u}_S(k) &= 0 \\ \tilde{v}_S(k) &= \tilde{v}_o + \frac{1}{1+\lambda^2\sigma^2} \left\{ \frac{i\sigma g}{f} \tilde{h}_o - \tilde{v}_o \right\} \\ \tilde{h}_S(k) &= \tilde{h}_o + \frac{H}{f} \frac{1}{1+\lambda^2\sigma^2} i\sigma \left\{ \frac{i\sigma g}{f} \tilde{h}_o - \tilde{v}_o \right\} . \end{aligned} \right\} \quad (25)$$

It is easily shown that

$$\frac{i\sigma g}{f} \tilde{h}_o - \tilde{v}_o = \mathcal{F} \left\{ \frac{g}{f} \frac{h(x+\Delta x, 0) - h(x-\Delta x, 0)}{2\Delta x} - v(x, 0) \right\} . \quad (26)$$

We shall let

$$\hat{d}(x, t) = v(x, t) - \frac{g}{f} \frac{h(x+\Delta x, t) - h(x-\Delta x, t)}{2\Delta x} . \quad (27)$$

Thus if we can invert

$$\frac{i\sigma}{1+\lambda^2\sigma^2} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{1}{1+\lambda^2\sigma^2} ,$$

the steady state solution would be available by convolution. These are inverted in Appendix 2, where we show

$$\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{1}{1+\lambda^2 \sigma^2} e^{ikx} dx = \frac{\frac{-\beta |x|}{\lambda} e^{-\beta |x|/\lambda}}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \delta(x-2n\Delta x),$$

and

$$\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{i\sigma}{1+\lambda^2 \sigma^2} e^{ikx} dk = \frac{\frac{-\Delta x}{\lambda} e^{-\beta |x|/\lambda}}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \delta(x-(2n-1)\Delta x)$$

where

$$\beta = \frac{\lambda}{\Delta x} \sinh^{-1}\left(\frac{\Delta x}{\lambda}\right), \quad (28)$$

and $0 < \beta \leq 1$ with equality only for $\Delta x = 0$.

Thus we can arrive at

$$\begin{aligned} v_S(x) &= v(x,0) - \Delta x \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left\{ \frac{e^{-\beta |s|/\lambda}}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \delta(s-2n\Delta x) \right\} \hat{d}(x-s,0) ds \\ &= v(x,0) - \frac{1}{2\sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \left\{ e^{-\beta |2n\Delta x|/\lambda} \hat{d}(x-2n\Delta x,0) (2\Delta x) \right\}, \quad (29) \end{aligned}$$

and similarly

$$h_S(x) = h(x,0) + \frac{H}{2\lambda\sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2} f} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \left\{ e^{-\beta |(2n-1)\Delta x|/\lambda} \hat{d}(x-(2n-1)\Delta x,0) (2\Delta x) \right\}. \quad (30)$$

Clearly (29)-(30) tend toward the corresponding integral forms (14) as $\Delta x \rightarrow 0$.

These expressions can now be examined versus (14). The conclusions that we can draw are that conversion of (1)-(3) to centered, second order, quasi-discrete form results in:

(1) The measure of imbalance, the initial ageostrophic wind, is converted to a finite differenced measure.

(2) Although at steady-state the effects of an initial disturbance die off exponentially away from its original neighborhood, the rate of decay is less than in the differential case. Furthermore, the rate of decay decreases as $(\Delta x/\lambda)$ increases.

(3) For the steady states, only the values of the ageostrophic wind at alternating points are considered.

One interpretation of why the sums in (29)-(30) involves only alternating points may be that, when elimination is tried on (21), one ends with the equation for u involving only alternating points:

$$\frac{\partial^2}{\partial t^2} u(x,t) = -f^2 u(x,t) + \frac{gH}{4(\Delta x)^2} \left\{ u(x+2\Delta x, t) - 2u(x, t) + u(x-2\Delta x, t) \right\}. \quad (31)$$

A complete stationary phase analysis of the transient solution in the quasi-discrete case:

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \tilde{u}_T(k, t) &= \tilde{u}_o \cos \hat{v}t + \frac{f}{\hat{v}} \left\{ \tilde{v}_o - \frac{i\sigma g}{f} \tilde{h}_o \right\} \sin \hat{v}t \\ \tilde{v}_T(k, t) &= \frac{f}{\hat{v}} \tilde{u}_o \sin \hat{v}t + \frac{f^2}{\hat{v}^2} \left\{ \tilde{v}_o - \frac{i\sigma g}{f} \tilde{h}_o \right\} \cos \hat{v}t \\ \tilde{h}_T(k, t) &= -\frac{i\sigma H}{\hat{v}} \tilde{u}_o \sin \hat{v}t - \frac{i\sigma Hf}{\hat{v}^2} \left\{ \tilde{v}_o - \frac{ikg}{f} \tilde{h}_o \right\} \cos \hat{v}t \end{aligned} \right\} \quad (32)$$

is algebraically extremely complicated, although quite straightforward. However, the salient features are relatively easily treated, and yield the most significant results on the transient behavior. Therefore we only present an outline of the details.

In computing the inversion integrals for (32), terms of the form

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} A(k) e^{i(kx \pm \hat{v}t)} dk$$

arise. The stationary phase points of these integrals arise as the solutions of

$$\phi'(k) = x \pm \frac{f \lambda^2 t \cos k\Delta x \frac{\sin k\Delta x}{\Delta x}}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{\lambda}{\Delta x}\right)^2 \sin^2 k\Delta x}} = 0. \quad (33)$$

This expression can be simplified by adding $(-x)$ to both sides, squaring and writing $\cos^2 k\Delta x$ as $(1 - \sin^2 k\Delta x)$, to yield a quadratic in $\sin^2 k\Delta x$. The quadratic formula then yields as the points of stationary phase the solutions of

$$\sin^2 k\Delta x = \frac{(\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2) \pm \sqrt{(\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2)^2 - 4f^2 t^2 x^2 (\Delta x)^2}}{2\lambda^2 f^2 t^2}. \quad (34)$$

It is then easily shown that as $t \rightarrow \infty$, these solutions closely approximate:

$$\sin^2 k\Delta x \doteq 1 - \frac{x^2}{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2} \quad (35a)$$

and

$$\sin^2 k\Delta x \doteq \frac{x^2 (\Delta x)^2 \lambda^{-2}}{(\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2)}. \quad (35b)$$

Clearly, for large t , (35b) yields stationary points near both

$$k = \frac{\pm x \lambda^{-1}}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 t^2 - x^2}}$$

and

$$k = \pm \frac{\pi}{\Delta x}.$$

(All other solutions of (35b) are beyond the Nyquist cut-off.) The first points are slight variants of the stationary points for the differential case. The points near $\pm(\pi/\Delta x)$ arise solely from the discretization, not the physics of the problem. However, since these points give a behavior of $((\sin k\Delta x)/\Delta x)$ identical to that of the stationary points near $k = 0$, it is easily shown that they contribute computational transients with precisely the same asymptotic behavior as the physical transients.

Note, before we consider the effect of terms introduced by the first solution, (35a), that a necessary and sufficient condition for the stationary phase points to be on the real axis is that the quantity under the radical sign in (34) be positive. After some manipulation, this condition reduces to

$$\frac{|x|}{t} > f \left\{ \sqrt{(\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2} - \Delta x \right\}, \quad t > 0.$$

It is not coincidental that the quantity on the right hand side of the inequality is precisely the group propagation velocity for this quasi-discrete case.

Referring again to the contribution from the stationary phase points satisfying (35a), observe that we can easily show from (33) that

$$\phi''(k) = \frac{\pm \lambda^2 f t}{\left[1 + \left(\frac{\lambda}{\Delta x}\right)^2 \sin^2 k \Delta x\right]^{3/2}} \left\{ - \left(1 + \left(\frac{\lambda}{\Delta x}\right)^2 \sin^2 k \Delta x\right) \sin^2 k \Delta x + \cos^2 k \Delta x \right\}$$

and so, near these stationary points

$$\phi''(k) \sim \frac{\pm \lambda^2 f t \Delta x}{\sqrt{(\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2}} .$$

Furthermore, note that near these same points

$$\frac{\hat{v}}{f} \sim \frac{\sqrt{(\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2}}{\Delta x} \quad \text{and} \quad \sigma \sim \frac{\pm 1}{\Delta x} .$$

Thus following again the argument of (3.7.5) in Miles [5], we see that the points of stationary phase which arise from the solution to the first lead to transients whose amplitudes, asymptotically, go as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{u}_0 \cos \hat{v} t &\rightarrow \left[\frac{\sqrt{(\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2}}{2\pi \lambda^2 f t \Delta x} \right]^{1/2} \left| \hat{u} \left(\pm \frac{\pi}{2\Delta x}, 0 \right) \right| \\ \frac{f}{\hat{v}} \left\{ \hat{v}_0 - \frac{i\sigma g}{f} \hat{h}_0 \right\} \sin \hat{v} t &\rightarrow \left[\frac{\Delta x}{2\pi \lambda^2 f t \sqrt{(\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2}} \right]^{1/2} \left| \hat{d} \left(\pm \frac{\pi}{2\Delta x}, 0 \right) \right| \\ - \frac{f}{\hat{v}} \hat{u}_0 \sin \hat{v} t &\rightarrow \left[\frac{\Delta x}{2\pi \lambda^2 f t \sqrt{(\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2}} \right]^{1/2} \left| \hat{u} \left(\pm \frac{\pi}{2\Delta x}, 0 \right) \right| \\ \frac{f^2}{\hat{v}^2} \left\{ \hat{v}_0 - \frac{i\sigma g}{f} \hat{h}_0 \right\} \cos \hat{v} t &\rightarrow \left[\frac{(\Delta x)^3}{2\pi \lambda^2 f t ((\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2)^{3/2}} \right]^{1/2} \left| \hat{d} \left(\pm \frac{\pi}{2\Delta x}, 0 \right) \right| \\ - \frac{i\sigma H}{\hat{v}} \hat{u}_0 \sin \hat{v} t &\rightarrow \left[\frac{H^2 f}{2\pi \lambda^2 t \Delta x \sqrt{(\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2}} \right]^{1/2} \left| \hat{u} \left(\pm \frac{\pi}{2\Delta x}, 0 \right) \right| \end{aligned}$$

$$- \frac{i\sigma H f}{\hat{v}^2} \left\{ \tilde{v}_o - \frac{i\sigma g}{f} \tilde{h}_o \right\} \cos \hat{v} t \rightarrow \left[\frac{H^2 f \Delta x}{2\pi \lambda^2 t \left((\Delta x)^2 + \lambda^2 \right)^{3/2}} \right]^{1/2} \left| d\left(\pm \frac{\pi}{2\Delta x}, 0 \right) \right|.$$

(Note the evaluations are at $\pm(\pi/2\Delta x)$ since, as $t \rightarrow \infty$, these are the only solutions of (35a) that also satisfy the Nyquist limit.)

Viewing the above, it is now clear that the additional stationary points which arise in this quasi-discrete case, and which tend toward $\pm(\pi/2\Delta x)$ as $t \rightarrow \infty$ cause two noticeable effects on the transient behavior:

(1) All of these transients now die off as $t^{-1/2}$ due to dispersion. Comparing this to the results in the differential case, we see that these transients are at least as persistent as the differential transients, and for $h(x,t)$ more so, since the differential transients in $h(x,t)$ die out as $t^{-3/2}$.

(2) Two of these transients (the first and fifth) are somewhat ill behaved as $(\Delta x) \rightarrow 0$. Assuming $u(x,0)$ has only finite power, then the Δx term in the denominator should be controlled by tail-off of $\tilde{u}(\pm \frac{\pi}{2\Delta x}, 0)$ as $(\Delta x) \rightarrow 0$, however, these terms are virtually certain to be the slowest decaying for small Δx .

(We note that (35b) also causes stationary points to arise, that tend toward $\pm(\pi/\Delta x)$ as $t \rightarrow \infty$, however, the transients from these points do not have an asymptotic dispersion decay that depends on (Δx) , and decay at the same rate as the differential transients.) Although we shall not show it analytically, we suspect the additional stationary points arise in the quasi-discrete case from two causes, the "folding" in temporal frequency that occurs at $k = \pm(\pi/2\Delta x)$, and the high frequency cut off at $k = \pm(\pi/\Delta x)$.

4. Conclusion

In this paper we have examined the effect of second order centered spatial discretization on a dispersive wave equation. We have shown that the methods of Fourier Transforms, and in particular the method of stationary phase, are quite useful in such investigations. In both the differential and quasi-discrete cases we have provided closed form expressions for the steady-state solutions. These expressions show that the contribution from any point in the initial state to the final state decays exponentially with distance from that point in both cases, however the rate of decay is decreased by discretization. The transients in both cases have been analyzed by the method of stationary phase. This analysis shows that the discretization introduces stationary phase points that have no counterpart in the differential case, and, furthermore, these points contribute transients that decay no faster than the differential ones, and in one instance, the discrete transient will dominate the differential transient.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the Naval Environmental Prediction Research Facility and the Fleet Numerical Weather Central, both at Monterey, California.

The author is also indebted to Professor Craig Comstock for several helpful discussions.

Appendix 1

Consider the asymptotic behavior of

$$\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} A(k) \cos vt e^{ikx} dk = \psi(x, t) , \quad (1-1)$$

where $v = f\sqrt{1+\lambda^2 k^2}$. This integral can be decomposed into

$$2\pi\psi(x, t) = \frac{1}{2} \left\{ \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} A(k) e^{i\phi_1(k)} dk + \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} A(k) e^{i\phi_2(k)} dk \right\} ,$$

where

$$\phi_1(k) = kx + vt, \quad \text{and} \quad \phi_2(k) = kx - vt .$$

We can now determine the asymptotic behavior as $t \rightarrow \infty$ for fixed x of this term by using the method of stationary phase. Let k_1 and k_2 be defined by

$$\phi'_1(k_1) = \phi'_2(k_2) = 0 .$$

But

$$\phi'_1(k) = x + \frac{\lambda^2 f t k}{\sqrt{1+\lambda^2 k^2}}$$

and so we find as the point of stationary phase for the first integral:

$$k_1 = - \frac{x/\lambda}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2}} , \quad (1-2)$$

which is on the path of integration, for $t > x/\lambda f$. Similarly,

$\phi_2'(k_2) = 0$ yields as the stationary point for the second integral,

$$k_2 = \frac{x/\lambda}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2}}, \quad (1-3)$$

which is also on the path of integration for $t > x/\lambda f$.

Observe that

$$\phi_1(k_1) = -\phi_2(k_2) = \frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2},$$

and that

$$\phi_1''(k_1) = -\phi_2''(k_2) = \frac{\lambda^2 f t}{\sqrt{1 + \lambda^2 k_1^2}} = \frac{(\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2)^{3/2}}{\lambda f^2 t^2} > 0.$$

(Note $|\phi_1''(k_1)| = |\phi_2''(k_2)| = \phi_1''(k_1)$, for $\lambda f t > |x|$.)

Thus we have, by (3.7.5) on p. 51 of Miles [5],

$$\begin{aligned} 2\pi\psi &\sim \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{2\pi}{\phi_1''(k_1)} \right)^{1/2} \left\{ A(k_1) e^{i \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \frac{\pi}{4} \right]} \right. \\ &\quad \left. + A(k_2) e^{-i \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \frac{\pi}{4} \right]} \right\} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{2\pi \lambda f^2 t^2}{[\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2]^{3/2}} \right)^{1/2} \left\{ A(-k_2) e^{i \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \frac{\pi}{4} \right]} \right. \\ &\quad \left. + A(k_2) e^{-i \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \frac{\pi}{4} \right]} \right\}. \end{aligned}$$

But note that if $A(k)$ is the transform of a purely real valued function,

$$A(-k) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} a(x) e^{ikx} dx = A^*(k) .$$

Thus, we can write:

$$\begin{aligned} \psi \sim & \left[\frac{\lambda f^2 t^2}{2\pi(\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2)^{3/2}} \right]^{1/2} \left\{ \text{Re } A(k_2) \cos \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \frac{\pi}{4} \right] \right. \\ & \left. + \text{Im } A(k_2) \sin \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \frac{\pi}{4} \right] \right\} , \end{aligned} \quad (1-4)$$

where k_2 is given by (1-3). Observe for $\lambda f t \gg |x|$, the lead term acts as

$$\left[\frac{1}{2\pi\lambda^2 f t} \right]^{1/2} .$$

Similarly we can show

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} A(k) \sin vt e^{ikx} dk \\ \sim & \left[\frac{\lambda f^2 t^2}{2\pi(\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2)^{3/2}} \right]^{1/2} \left\{ \text{Re } A(k_2) \sin \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \frac{\pi}{4} \right] \right. \\ & \left. - \text{Im } A(k_2) \cos \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \frac{\pi}{4} \right] \right\} . \end{aligned} \quad (1-5)$$

Lastly, since the trigonometric functions in both expressions have the same frequency, and since

$$\sqrt{[\text{Re } A(k)]^2 + [\text{Im } A(k)]^2} = |A(k)|$$

we see

$$\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} A(k) \cos vt e^{ikx} dx \sim \left[\frac{\lambda f^2 t^2}{2\pi (\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2)^{3/2}} \right]^{1/2} |A(k_2)| \cos \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \vartheta_k \right]$$

$$\vartheta_k = \frac{\pi}{4} - \tan^{-1} [\text{Im } A(k_2) / \text{Re } A(k_2)]$$

$$= \frac{\pi}{4} - \arg(A(k_2))$$

and

$$\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} A(k) \sin vt e^{ikx} dx \sim \left[\frac{\lambda f^2 t^2}{2\pi (\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2)^{3/2}} \right]^{1/2} |A(k_2)| \sin \left[\frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\lambda^2 f^2 t^2 - x^2} + \vartheta_k \right]$$

Appendix 2

Consider

$$\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{e^{ikx} dx}{1 + \lambda^2 \sigma^2}, \quad \text{where } \sigma = \frac{\sin k \Delta x}{\Delta x} \quad (2-1)$$

The denominator,

$$\psi(k) = 1 + \left(\frac{\lambda}{\Delta x}\right)^2 \sin^2 k \Delta x \quad (2-2)$$

is an entire function of k in the complex plane. The zeros of $\psi(k)$ are solutions of:

$$\sin k \Delta x = \pm i \frac{\Delta x}{\lambda},$$

or, letting $k = k_r + i k_i$

$$\begin{aligned} & \sin(k_r \Delta x + i k_i \Delta x) \\ &= \sin(k_r \Delta x) \cosh(k_i \Delta x) + i \cos(k_r \Delta x) \sinh(k_i \Delta x) \\ &= \pm i \left(\frac{\Delta x}{\lambda}\right). \end{aligned}$$

Thus

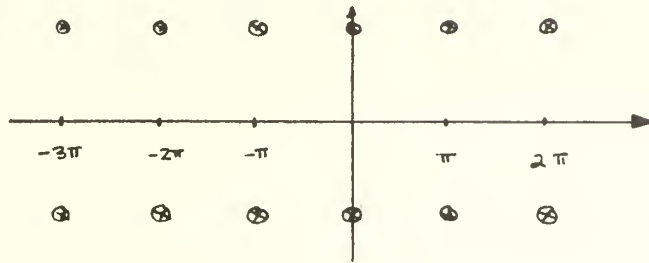
$$\begin{aligned} \sin(k_r \Delta x) \cosh(k_i \Delta x) &= 0 \\ \cos(k_r \Delta x) \sinh(k_i \Delta x) &= \pm \left(\frac{\Delta x}{\lambda}\right). \end{aligned}$$

Thus

$$k_r = \pm \frac{n\pi}{\Delta x}, \quad k_i = \pm \frac{1}{\Delta x} \sinh^{-1} \left(\frac{\Delta x}{\lambda} \right). \quad (2-3)$$

as opposed to the poles at $k_r = 0$, $k_i = \pm 1/\lambda$ for the continuous case.

Thus all zeros of the denominator lie off the real axis. In fact, they are specifically distributed as shown:



Observe further that at its zeros,

$$\begin{aligned}
 \psi'(k) &= 2 \frac{\lambda^2}{\Delta x} \sin k\Delta x \cos k\Delta x \\
 &= \pm 2 \frac{\lambda^2}{\Delta x} \left(i \frac{\Delta x}{\lambda} \right) \cosh \left[\pm \sinh^{-1} \left(\frac{\Delta x}{\lambda} \right) \right] \\
 &= \pm 2i \sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}
 \end{aligned} \tag{2-4}$$

where the positive sign holds for $k_i > 0$, and the negative one for $k_i < 0$. Thus the zeros of $\psi(k)$ are simple poles of the integrand.

Consider (2-1) for $x > 0$. (Observe that (2-1) is an even function of x .) To insure $\text{Re}(ikx) < 0$ we will close the contour in $\text{Im}(k) > 0$ half plane. As long as we route the contour to avoid all the poles there, the integrand is exponentially decaying as $|k| \rightarrow \infty$, $\text{Im}(k) > 0$. Thus, we invoke Jordan's lemma to yield, for $x > 0$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{e^{ikx} dx}{1 + \lambda^2 \sigma^2} &= i \sum_{\text{Im}(k) > 0} \text{Residues} \left(\frac{e^{ikx}}{1 + \lambda^2 \sigma^2} \right) \\
 &= i \sum_{\text{Im}(k) > 0} \frac{e^{\hat{k}x}}{\psi'(\hat{k})}, \quad \hat{k} = k_r + ik_i
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
&= \frac{1}{2\sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} \sum_{-\infty}^{\infty} \exp \left\{ ix \left(\frac{n\pi}{\Delta x} + i \frac{1}{\Delta x} \sinh^{-1} \left(\frac{\Delta x}{\lambda} \right) \right) \right\} \\
&= \frac{1}{2\sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} e^{-\frac{\beta x}{\lambda}} \sum_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{i \frac{n\pi x}{\Delta x}}, \quad (2-5)
\end{aligned}$$

where

$$\beta = \frac{\lambda}{\Delta x} \sinh^{-1} \left(\frac{\Delta x}{\lambda} \right). \quad (2-6)$$

Observe (2-5) is not a convergent series in the usual sense. However, viewed as a generalized function, it is a Fourier Series for the function, periodic of period $2\Delta x$, given in the interval $-\Delta x < x < \Delta x$ by

$$S(x) = \sum_{-\infty}^{\infty} c_n e^{i \frac{n\pi x}{\Delta x}} \quad \text{where } c_n \equiv 1.$$

But observe $c_n = \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \int_{-\Delta x}^{\Delta x} S(r) e^{-i \frac{n\pi r}{\Delta x}} dr = 1, \quad \text{all } n.$

Thus

$$S(t) = 2\Delta x \delta(t),$$

and so its periodic extension becomes

$$S(x) = 2\Delta x \sum_{-\infty}^{\infty} \delta(x - 2n\Delta x).$$

Thus

$$\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{e^{ikx}}{1+\lambda^2 \sigma^2} dk = \frac{\Delta x}{\sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} e^{\frac{-\beta|x|}{\lambda}} \sum_{-\infty}^{\infty} \delta(x-2n\Delta x). \quad (2-7)$$

Note, if we view β as a function

$$\beta(x) = \frac{1}{x} \sinh^{-1} x ,$$

it is easily shown:

$$\beta(0) = 1 \quad \text{and} \quad \beta'(x) < 0 .$$

Thus $0 < \beta(x) \leq 1$ with equality only at $x = 0$.

Since, for $\text{Im} k > 0$ and large

$$\frac{i\sigma}{1+\lambda^2 \sigma^2} \sim \frac{\Delta x}{\lambda^2 \sin kx} \sim \frac{\Delta x}{\lambda^2 e^{x \text{Im} k}}$$

the above argument can be essentially repeated for

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{i\sigma e^{ikx}}{1+\lambda^2 \sigma^2} dk &= i \sum_{\text{Im}(\hat{k}) > 0} \left\{ \frac{i\sigma(\hat{k}) e^{i\hat{k}x}}{\psi'(\hat{k})} \right\} \\ &= \frac{-1}{2\lambda \sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} e^{\frac{-\beta x}{\lambda}} \sum_{-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^n e^{i \frac{n\pi x}{\Delta x}} , \quad x > 0 \\ &= \frac{-1}{2\lambda \sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} e^{\frac{-\beta|x|}{\lambda}} \sum_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{i \frac{n\pi}{\Delta x} (x+\Delta x)} \\ &= \frac{-(\Delta x)}{\lambda \sqrt{\lambda^2 + (\Delta x)^2}} e^{\frac{-\beta|x|}{\lambda}} \sum_{-\infty}^{\infty} \delta(x-(2n-1)\Delta x) \end{aligned} \quad (2-8)$$

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